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Saw-whet Owl

On Sunday morning, December 6, 1931, at North Lake in Golden Gate Park, I saw, in a thick growth of some Maytenus Boaria trees, a small owl only three or four feet overhead. Noting its color and markings I arrived at the conclusion that it was a Saw-whet Owl. To satisfy myself that I was not mistaken I went home and consulted various bird books and returned in the afternoon and checked more carefully, confirming my original opinion.

Then I met Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Stephens. Mr. Stephens went to Mr. Carl Smith's residence for him and telephoned to Mr. Charles Bryant, both of whom arrived shortly and concurred in the identification.

The Saw-whet Owl is said to have very poor eyesight in the daytime, but Mr. Bryant demonstrated that this one saw quite well. He did this by waving his hand back and forth, the owl turning its head and following the movement of his hand.

Mr. Smith tried to reach for the bird, but it became frightened and flew across the path, perching on a very low limb. At this moment it was interesting to note the excitement of small birds nearby. A song sparrow and a dwarf hermit thrush in particular approached within a few feet of the owl, chattering constantly, obviously much concerned at the presence of this strange visitor. Then while Mr. Smith engaged the owl's attention Mr. Stephens approached slowly and quietly from behind and suddenly grabbed it. Being very small it was easily handled; though in fact, it showed very little anger or fear, merely making a slight snapping noise with its beak.

Just before capturing the owl we noticed it regurgitate a pellet, which we preserved and sent to the University of California where it was analyzed by Dr. Linsdale. The pellet consisted entirely of the hair and bones of one house mouse (*Mus musculus*).

After we had examined the bird thoroughly by spreading its wings and noting all its markings and coloration, its closely-feathered feet and particularly the middle toe, which has no claw, we liberated it. With its feathers slightly ruffled but none the worse for the experience it selected a perch, this time higher up, and resumed its nap.

B. C. Bremer, San Francisco, California. December 8, 1931.



Solitary Sandpipers

Solitary Sandpipers, other names: Solitary Tattler, Woodland Tattler. Two subspecies are recognized in the United States, the eastern species ranging over most of the continent while the western species is found in the west only.

This bird nests probably north of our border and winters in South America. In spite of the fact that I have hunted and have had the opportunity of examining thousands of sandpipers and shore birds which had been killed I do not recall ever having seen a Solitary Sandpiper until September 13, 1931, and this was at Lake Merced.

In "Bent's Life History of North American Shore Birds," they are referred to as early as 1844, but June 16, 1903, was the first authentic nesting record. This nest was an abandoned robin's nest located in a tamarack tree. All nesting information mentions four eggs, about the average clutch of the wader family, one clutch a year under normal conditions.

In our own State this bird shows a marked preference for certain migratory routes. "Game Birds of California" says it is "a fairly common spring and fall migrant throughout that portion of the State which is south of the Tehachapi, more rare in Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys, no records from the coast region north of Santa Barbara."

This species is as well protected from the hawk family as are other waders, and there is no reason for believing that it is molested by predatory animals on its nesting grounds any more than other species. It is little sought by hunters on account of its size and non-flocking flight. The question then arises, why is it so rare—so seldom seen?

Carl R. Smith, San Francisco, California. November 20, 1931.



Christmas Bird Census for 1931

San Francisco, California. (Marina, Presidio, Golden Gate Park not including Metson Lake, Stow Lake or the south side of the park as in former censuses, Ocean Beach and Lake Merced), December 20th, 9 a. m. to 5 p. m., a moderate southwest wind, heavy rain all day, average temp. 50°.

	Marina to Beach	Golden Gate Park	Lake Merced
Western Grebe	44	---	17
Pied-billed Grebe	1	2	30
California Heron	---	1	1
Common Mallard	17	47	25
Baldpate	6	6	11
Canvas-back	8	250	800
Lesser Scaup	6	1	4
Ruddy Duck	4	24	225
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1	1
Desert Sparrow Hawk	1	---	2
California Quail	43	129	---
American Coot	130+	156	125
Killdeer	8	340	5
Glaucous-winged Gull	363+	---	47
Western Gull	433+	---	103
California Gull	3165+	594	1307
Anna's Hummingbird	3	26	22
Red-shafted Flicker	3	21	11
Black Phoebe	3	4	5
Barlow's Chickadee	2	43	50
Coast Bush-tit	40	95	65
Slender-billed Nuthatch	---	3	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	---	1	2
Vigor's Wren	1	8	7
Pacific Varied Thrush	1	14	---
Dwarf Hermit Thrush	7	19	5
Golden-crowned Kinglet	---	4	35
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	6	22	8
American Pipit	39	22	1
Audubon's Warbler	3	104	10
Salt Marsh Yellow-throat	---	3	20
English Sparrow	6	11	---
Western Meadowlark	1	---	75

Brewer's Blackbird	404	----	1
San Francisco Towhee	1	14	3
Oregon Junco	-----	21	6
Nuttall's Sparrow	80	214	35
Golden-crowned Sparrow	6	21	-----
Fox Sparrow	9	24	40
Song Sparrow	23	36	30

In addition to the above the following birds were observed along the Marina to the ocean beach only: California Brown Pelican 182; Farallon Cormorant 92; Brandt's Cormorant 50; Ring-necked Duck 28; White-winged Scoter 15; Surf Scoter 2; Western Snowy Plover 57; Surf-bird 15; Ruddy Turnstone 5; Black Turnstone 21; Sanderling 85; Short-bill Gull 6; Ring-billed Gull 76; Bonaparte's Gull 38+; Western Mourning Dove 1; Western Robin 1; San Francisco Red-wing 12; California Purple Finch 8.

Golden Gate Park only: American Pintail 10; Wood Duck 1; Buffle-head 8; Townsend's Warbler 1.

Lake Merced only: Eared Grebe 115; Black-crowned Night Heron 1; American Bittern 3; Green-winged Teal 15; Shoveller 5; American Golden-eye 1; Red-breasted Merganser 3; Western Red-tailed Hawk 1; Virginia Rail 4; Sora 1; Wilson's Snipe 7; Least Sandpiper 25; Western Sandpiper 4; Herring Gull 6; Western Burrowing Owl 1; California Horned Lark 1; Ruddy Wren-tit 3; Western Winter Wren 2; Tule Wren 20; California Shrike 1; Myrtle Warbler 1; Common House Finch 6; Pine Siskin 4; Green-backed Goldfinch 6; Willow Goldfinch 15.

A total of 87 species, 11,249+ individuals.

Observers: Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Stephens, Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Thomas; Mesdames H. P. Bracelin, Otis H. Smith; Misses Danz, Payne, Pringle; Messrs. Bolander, Bryant, Harris, Hopkins, Jencks, McClintock, Myer, Rosher, Carl Smith, Swanton.



December Field Trip was taken on Sunday, the 12th, to the University of California campus. A cold, dark morning accompanied by a brisk wind which finally brought rain in such quantities at noon time that the twenty-one members and five guests present unanimously voted to accept the friendly invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Myer to have not only dessert at their home, but also to eat their luncheons there. The decision proved a happy one.

The gracious hospitality of our host and hostess was emphasized in a material way by delicious cake and cups of steaming hot coffee which inspired and prolonged pleasant table talk. A cheerful fire in the fireplace furnished the feeling of warmth and coziness which one enjoys so much when spending a rainy afternoon indoors. Luncheon was followed by a discussion of birds and bird guessing contests. All present agreed that Mr. and Mrs. Myer were the ideal host and hostess and that the afternoon would linger long in their memories.

The morning's birding furnished a fair sized list for the area covered. Two Townsend Warblers and two Slender-billed Nuthatches attracted the most attention. Western Bluebirds feeding on a lawn appeared to be quite at home.

A total of thirty species was noted as follows:

Sharp-shinned Hawk	Slender-billed Nuthatch	House Sparrow
California Quail	Bewick Wren	Purple Finch
California Gull	Robin	Linnet
Anna Hummingbird	Varied Thrush	Spotted Towhee
Red-shafted Flicker	Hermit Thrush	Brown Towhee
Black Phoebe	Western Bluebird	Fox Sparrow
Steller Jay	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Oregon Junco
California Jay	American Pipit	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Plain Titmouse	Audubon Warbler	Nuttall Sparrow
Bush-tit	Townsend Warbler	Song Sparrow

C. A. Bryant, historian.

Audubon Notes

January Meeting: The 15th annual meeting will be held on Thursday evening, the 14th, at 8 p. m., room 19, 2nd floor, Ferry Building.

Annual reports will be presented and officers and directors elected for the coming year.

The speaker of the evening will be our former president, Mr. Bert Harwell, who will speak on "Birding in Yosemite." The lecture will be illustrated.



Directors' Meeting: There will be a meeting of the Directors at 6:45 on January 14th in the Ferry Building.



January Field Trip will be taken to the wild waterfowl sanctuary at Lake Merritt, Oakland, on Sunday, the 17th. San Francisco members will take Key Route Boat at 9 a. m. and the Grand Avenue car on the Twenty-second Street train, leaving the car at Grand Avenue and Perkins Street, where party will form at 9:45 a. m.

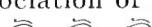
East Bay members will transfer from any traction main line to Grand Avenue or Lakeshore Avenue cars. Leader, C. A. Bryant.



Saturday Field Trip will be taken on the 23rd to the University Campus, Berkeley. San Francisco members take 1 o'clock Key Route boat and Berkeley train to end of line, where party will form at 1:45. Mrs. H. P. Bracelin, leader.



1932 Dues. The Annual dues for the year of 1932 are now payable and all members are asked to make their remittances as early as possible to the Treasurer. It is requested that all checks be made in the name of the Audubon Association of the Pacific.



Late Date: Mr. Brighton C. Cain reported observing for many minutes in Dimond Park, Oakland, on Saturday,

November 21st, a Pileolated Warbler.

Mrs. Bessie Kibbe reported watching for nearly half an hour in her garden in Berkeley on Tuesday morning, December 15th, a Western Mockingbird.



December Meeting: The 178th regular meeting was held on December 10th, in room 19, Ferry Building, with forty-one members and guests present.

The following new members were elected:

Miss Isabel Porter Collins, Vallejo; Miss Grace M. Taylor, Marvin Rowe, Elwin Earl Scott, all of Oakland; Emile R. Jacob of San Francisco.

Field observations were reported as follows:

Commander and Mrs. Parmenter: November 18th, Dumbarton and San Mateo Bridges, 26 White Pelicans, 13 Red Phalaropes, 6 Northern Phalaropes, 178 Avocets. December 1st, Crystal Springs Lake, 18 Canada Geese.

Mrs. A. B. Stephens: November 26th, 10 White Pelicans sailing over Chain of Lakes, Golden Gate Park. November 29th, salt ponds, Redwood City, at least 1000 Willits; December 6th, Chain of Lakes, Black-crowned Night Heron.

Jackson Stalder: December 10th, Oakland, Vesper Sparrow.

Morgan Harris: November 29th, Cliff House, Black Turnstones and Surf Birds.

Mrs. C. N. Compton: November 8th, Spreckels Lake, Golden Gate Park, Redhead.

Robert Taylor: November 28th, San Pablo Dam, 12 Whistling Swans.

Mr. Joseph Dixon was the speaker of the evening. The account of his experiences with Trumpeter Swans in Yellowstone National Park added another delightful chapter to those which Mr. Dixon has already given us on other forms of wild life.

Audubon Association of the Pacific For the Study and the Protection of Birds

President.....	Brighton C. Cain.....	221 Thayer Bldg., Oakland
Corresponding Secretary.....	C. B. Lastreto.....	260 California St., San Francisco
Treasurer.....	Mrs. A. B. Stephens.....	1695 Filbert St., San Francisco
Monthly meeting second Thursday, 8 P. M., Room 19, Ferry Building.		
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Members are responsible for dues until written notice of resignation is received by Treasurer.		
Life memberships, \$50.00		